

## **Critical Incidents Protocol (for shared reflection)**

This protocol provides a structured, less-threatening means for teachers to talk about their beliefs and practices. It is a useful way to "share one's work" as well and can be used with students as a strategy for peer review.

1. **Write individual stories that will be shared.** [SUGGESTIONS: Describe your most powerful learning experience during your first year of teaching. Describe a learner that you struggled with last year and your insights about how you might approach this learner now. Describe the most meaningful mentors you have encountered in your life. Explain the traits that you are trying to incorporate into your own teaching self.]
2. **Group decides individual roles:**
  - **Presenter:** Who will share first? The presenter will share his/her story with the group, reading and/or telling the full account without remarks from listeners.
  - **Responders:** Beginning with the person to the presenter's left, each person in the group takes a turn responding to the presenter's story. Keep responses brief and focused ---
    - Respond to the connections that the presenter seems to be making between his/her own story and the original text.
    - Respond to the story by connecting it to something from the text that you read.
    - Respond to the story by connecting it to your own story.

**Recorder:** Person to the right of the presenter. Records the key words, phrases, events, etc. that come up as the responders make their comments. Try to capture patterns, distinctive points, insights, and such as the group members make their connections.  
*The RECORDER does not respond to the story.*
3. **Follow the process. Take turns with the roles until everyone has a chance to share a story.**
4. **Examine the combined notes.** {These may vary depending upon the story prompt.}
  - Look for patterns: What are some of the common ideas about learning? What is the "language" of learning --- what words, phrases, metaphors do we use when we talk about it?
  - Look for distinctions: Were there features or conditions that stood out as different in some way? How?
5. **Consider the notes, insights, stories, and conversations. What do these suggest about the beliefs, assumptions, and understandings of learning and learners explored by members of the group?**

Adapted from a description of a Critical Incidents Protocol provided by the Indiana Essential Schools Network and taken from the following article: Hole, S. and McEntee, G. (May 1999). Reflection is at the heart of practice. *Educational Leadership*. 34-37.